

VIII. Rules of Governance

PBIN will develop formal contractual agreements between the partners. While decision-making will be collaborative, final administrative authority rests with the NBII/USGS. In the spirit of collaboration, difficult decisions will be made with the following principles in mind:

1. All partners are equal and will form a steering committee for PBIN.
2. The steering committee may form ad hoc working groups as needed to provide recommendations on specific issues.
3. The steering committee will address any and all decisions that are relevant to PBIN; i.e., key annual directions, what projects to recommend for funding, reasonable resource allocations, etc.
4. The general operating principle is to make well informed, highly inclusive, and consensual decisions in which everyone agrees. However, recognizing that consensus may not be achievable for every decision, and acknowledging NBII's overall administrative authority, the default decision-making mode for group decisions, will be a majority vote.
5. The steering committee will work closely with the PBIN coordinator and the NBII steering committee to reach agreement on critical decisions.
6. An annual report will be prepared for all partners, affiliates, and users summarizing accomplishments and serving as data for out-year planning.

IX. Current Partners

This strategic plan is formed by the following partners. Future partners will be added by agreement of the Steering Committee.

- ◆ U.S. Geological Survey, Pacific Island Ecosystems Research Center (PIERC)
- ◆ U.S. Department of Agriculture Institute of Pacific Islands Forestry (USDA/FS/IPIF)
- ◆ Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum (BPBM)
- ◆ Hawaii Natural Heritage Program (HINHP)
- ◆ The Nature Conservancy of Hawaii (TNCH)
- ◆ Center for Conservation Research and Training, University of Hawaii (CCRT-UH)
- ◆ U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS)
- ◆ National Park Service (NPS)
- ◆ Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR)
- ◆ Maui High Performance Computing Center (MHPCC)
- ◆ National Biological Information Infrastructure (NBII)



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Pacific Basin Information Node



STRATEGIC PLAN 2002 to 2005

<http://pb.in.nbii.gov/about/strategicplan.html>

I. Purpose of the Plan

This plan is the result of a series of collaborative strategizing meetings held in April and May of 2002. The plan was developed by the agencies and organizations listed in the back as “Partners.” The plan seeks to guide PBIN’s initial organization and development and has a 3-year time horizon from now through 2005. Specifically, the plan:

1. Describes PBIN’s background and mission;
2. Charts the broad actions needed to bring PBIN to a point of maturity; and
3. Establishes expectations about organizational directions and governance.

Recognizing that having a “strategy” is always more important than having a fancy strategic plan, we note that this document is a framework and jumping off point rather than a specific blueprint.

II. General Background

Pacific Basin Information Node (“PBIN”) is the marriage of several initiatives, all intended to address emerging conservation issues throughout the Pacific Basin. The national effort, or National Biological Information Infrastructure (NBII), grew from studies sponsored by the Department of the Interior and the Office of Science and Technology Policy. Those studies recognized the need for a partnership to develop a “National Biotic Resources Information System.” The system was originally envisioned as a distributed “federation of databases” designed to make existing information more accessible and to establish mechanisms for efficient, coordinated collection and dissemination of new information. Further review by The President’s Committee of Advisers on Science and Technology (PCAST, 1998) urged a more active role in the form of analytic and synthetic abilities. Simultaneously, local organizations and individuals concerned with Pacific Island conservation urged further collaboration on the scientific and informational aspects of locally pressing issues, especially the escalating invasion of alien species.

III. Mission

The overriding purpose of PBIN is to equip people with an ongoing information infrastructure through which high quality biodiversity information related to Hawaii and the Pacific Basin can be acquired, analyzed, and distributed.

IV. Vision

When fully realized, PBIN will be a sophisticated, intuitive, and comprehensive knowledge base for the biological resources associated with the Pacific Basin including tropical and subtropical islands and the surrounding marine environment. It will serve as a resource for educating people, enabling scientific progress, and addressing issues related to biodiversity conservation. On a daily basis, it will provide tools that can be used to discover, access, and analyze data about the region’s biological resources. Users entering the system will find image taxonomies, GIS maps, and other materials that will allow them to perform general or specialized analyses.

V. PBIN Participants

PBIN will support a wide range of users including, but not limited to, scientists, policy makers, resource managers, land use planners and developers, students, teachers, and the general public. A broad diversity of users will be intentionally encouraged. Organizationally, PBIN will be guided by a “steering committee” made up of institutional “partners” who also may be major users and led by PBIN’s director, who is functionally accountable to the NBII. Broad participation and involvement in the development of PBIN is encouraged.

VI. Key Planning Assumptions

1. Because conservation issues are critical to the future of Hawaii and the Pacific region, there is a pressing and shared need for high quality information among all concerned organizations. While PBIN will initially have a Hawaiian focus, over the longer term it will become as geographically comprehensive as possible through efforts around the Pacific Basin and through linkages to other regions.
2. From the outset, PBIN is intended to be a collaboration of interested federal, state, and local agencies; educational institutions; and non-governmental organizations. While each organization has its own mission and agenda, which may or may not be consistent with all other PBIN participants, all partners share a common mission of supporting conservation based upon good science and are working together on this node out of shared goals and expectations.
3. Because of the potentially large amounts of data and the complex nature of the problems faced by

3. the conservation community, this plan is predicated on access to supercomputing capabilities.
4. Initial base funding for PBIN will come primarily from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Eventually, funding will come from a variety of sources in addition to the base NBII funds. These sources will provide funds for specific unique projects as well as base funds where appropriate.
5. PBIN will seek to provide data openly and freely to facilitate data analysis and knowledge development. However, it will operate in such a way so as to allow contributors to retain ownership of their data and ensure that they get credit for sharing their data as a part of PBIN.
6. PBIN will try to provide access to data or information that is only available through purchase. However, PBIN itself will not be involved in any transactions between buyers and sellers. Transactions will be the responsibility of data owners and interested clients. PBIN itself will not sell data.
7. While PBIN will not normally fund biological research, funds may be made available for data recovery or development of analyses and synthesis tools.
8. PBIN anticipates the need for differential levels of access to data. All decisions over access, confidentiality, and propriety will be determined by data contributors, and not by PBIN.

VII. Key Strategies

To bring the PBIN system to its full capabilities, four complementary and interrelated goals must be achieved over the next several years:

1. Build PBIN’s infrastructure and content, i.e., the hardware and software systems needed and the information, data, and tools that it will contain.
2. Develop and refine PBIN’s services to partners, users, and other affiliates. This will begin by building a strong base in Hawaii and the U.S. territories and then expand to other countries.
3. Develop and refine PBIN’s operations and collaborative governance. The operations component should include a strategy for business development that is based upon both scope and geography.
4. Conduct systematic outreach, education, and communication to all contributors and users.